

Call to Vocational Ministry

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1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

As a young 16 year-old who faithfully attended his church and youth group his entire life, I sincerely enjoyed serving the Lord in ministry. Never once did it occur to me that I shouldn't spend my nights and weekends at church serving in some capacity. It was not only a passion, but something that gave me purpose. Not only did I enjoy helping lead worship, or run the sound board, or serve as a counselor in youth ministry – but I understood the spiritual implications and what that small bit of service meant to the body of Christ. All of these things considered, I was about 16 years old when I simply *desired* to be a pastor. That's it. There were no mystical feelings, no writings on the wall, no signs. I just desired to be in ministry one day. And the Bible says that desire is a "good" thing.

Now, there was certainly a long road ahead of me. But I just simply submitted to whatever my pastoral leadership told me to do. I was disciplined. I served as much as I could. I studied. I took Bible college classes online, as well as under my pastors. I did whatever it took to prepare for this burden that God had placed in my heart – to shepherd people according to His word.

I believe that God is very specific about *how* He calls men to ministry service. In Acts 13:1-4, God lists some very important qualifications about Paul and Barnabas as they are sent forth "by the Holy Ghost":

- They were actively ministering to the Lord
- They were walking with the Lord
- The Holy Ghost made it clear to the church and leadership that Paul and Barnabas were to be "separated"
- Paul and Barnabas were being separated to a specific "work" that God was calling them to
- The church leadership fasted and prayed about it
- In agreement, the church laid hands on them and sent them out, in accordance with the call of the Holy Ghost

This is how God separates men to ministry – not to a place, but to a work. As a young man, I was given a burden, which was simply a desire to serve the Lord in vocational ministry. In response to that call, I prepared myself through every avenue of service and education that my church offered me. As I actively walked with the Lord, and served in ministry, God made it clear to my pastors, through the Holy Ghost, that He was calling me to a work. That work, at the

time, happened to be to serve as the youth pastor at our church. As a result, I came on staff and continued my formal Bible College training. Upon completion and graduation, I was ordained in August of 2017, with the laying on of hands by pastors and deacons.

I continued to serve as the Youth Pastor at First Baptist Church, until God made it clear to me and the other pastors through the word of God, and the Holy Ghost, that the time was nearing for me to move to Hungary to plant churches. This was not a strange call, as I had surrendered my life to missions work at a mission conference in 2012, and had since been serving on annual missions trips to Hungary alongside Pastor Brett Bartlett, and Wyldewood Baptist Church.

So, at the direction of the Holy Ghost and word of God, and the unanimous agreement of my local church's pastors and leadership, I have heeded the Lord's call to move my family to Hungary, to continue the "work" that He has already started there. Many confirmations of details and timing have accompanied this process. I am fully persuaded that God has called my family to serve Him in the country of Hungary, and we are obeying Him as He guides and directs us, just one step at a time.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.